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ABSTRACT

Prepared by the Illinois Community College-Senior College Task Force on Articulation, this report examines the current status of articulation among and between community colleges and senior colleges and universities in Illinois, and recommends a program of articulation for the state. Section I provides an introduction and background to Illinois's efforts to improve articulation in the state. Section II sets the articulation question within the context of a growing lack of consensus among community college and senior college administrators, faculty, and students regarding the articulation of baccalaureate-oriented community college curricula and corresponding four-year college programs. Section III describes the methods used to collect data from community college and senior college representatives, potential transfer students, and transfer students at four-year institutions, while section IV offers a summary of the major findings of the research activities. Section V presents a series of recommendations, including: (1) the refinement of efforts to communicate senior colleges' admissions requirements to potential transfer students; (2) the continuation of the discussion of lower-/upper-division course classification; (3) improved course advising at community colleges; and (4) the designation of faculty or staff at the senior colleges to serve as academic advisors specifically for transfer students. (AYC)

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COMMUNITY COLLEGE-SENIOR COLLEGE ARTICULATION IN ILLINOIS

SUMMARY OF

A REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
BY THE
ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE-SENIOR COLLEGE
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ARTICULATION TASK FORCE

AUGUST, 1978

This report is issued by the Illinois Community College-Senior College Task Force on Articulation created by joint resolution of the Illinois Community College Coordinators and the Illinois Senior College Coordinators on November 18, 1976, at Springfield, Illinois. The views and conclusions expressed in this report are solely those of the members of the Illinois Community College-Senior College Task Force and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the colleges, universities, or agencies with which they are affiliated.

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I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Illinois Community College-Senior College Task Force on Articulation was established in November, 1976, upon joint recommendation by the Community College Coordinators and Senior College Coordinators. Its purpose was to study the current state of articulation among and between community colleges and senior colleges and universities in Illinois and to recommend a program of articulation for the state. The establishment of the Task Force occurred after a decade of rapid growth in the number of community colleges as well as community college enrollment. In addition, the Task Force was created after a two-year period during which an Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) Ad Hoc Committee had developed and recommended a Baccalaureate Articulation Compact for consideration and approval by all senior colleges and universities in Illinois (see Attachment A). This proposed Baccalaureate Articulation Compact was developed after approximately six years of experience with the 1970 Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) "Resolution on Transfer Equivalency of the Junior-Community College Associate Degree in Baccalaureate Sequences" commonly known as the general education compact (see recommendation A1, p. 5).

II

THE PROBLEM

Since the establishment of the Class I community college system in 1965, there has been a growing lack of consensus among community college and senior college and university administrators, faculty, and students regarding the articulation of baccalaureate-oriented community college curricula and corresponding baccalaureate degree programs at senior colleges and universities. Some believe that the community colleges should have the primary authority and responsibility to determine the course content and program sequences of the first two years of baccalaureate degree programs for students who attend community colleges and complete a baccalaureate oriented associate degree.

Others argue that the primary authority and responsibility for determining bachelor's degree requirements, including requirements for the first two years, should continue to reside with the faculty of the senior institution which awards the degree. There are many points on the continuum between these two positions. In addition, there is a growing number of community college students who complete career-oriented associate degrees and transfer to senior colleges and universities to complete traditional or capstone bachelor's degrees. This practice creates problems related to acceptance of credit and time required to complete a degree.

III

METHOD

Survey research techniques and public hearings were utilized to collect data for this study. Descriptive and analytical statistics were used to present the data and to support the conclusions and recommendations. Data were collected from five sources: testimony and written statements submitted at four public hearings, a survey of community college representatives, a survey of senior institution representatives, a survey of potential community college transfer students, and a survey of community college transfer students at senior institutions. Forty-one persons either testified or submitted written statements at one of the four hearings. Forty-three of the 49 community colleges, all of the public senior universities, and 11 of the 30 nonpublic senior colleges and universities invited to participate in the study responded to the institutional survey. A total of 1,311 (66%) usable responses were received from a sample of 1,991 potential transfer students at 43 community colleges, and 926 (41%) usable responses were received from a sample of 2,285 community college transfers at 25 senior colleges and universities.

The potential transfers at community colleges and the community college transfers at senior institutions responded to a common question in each of 14 potential problem areas by indicating whether it was a major, minor, or no problem. Demographic and academic characteristics of each student were

self-reported. Response data for each of the problem areas were analyzed to obtain mean response score, standard deviation, and variance of each item for the potential community college transfers and the community college transfers on senior college campuses. The number and percent of respondents who indicated no problem, minor problem, major problem, or who did not respond were presented. Analysis of variance (F Ratio) tests was used to identify the demographic variables related to whether or not a student indicated there was a problem and, if so, the severity of the problem. Potential and actual problem areas with mean scores of 1.50 or above on a 3 point scale of problem severity, and with one-third or more of the respondents indicating either a major or minor problem, were considered by the Task Force as deserving serious attention by appropriate policy groups.

IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS*

1. While some transfer articulation problems do exist, most students appear to transfer from community colleges to senior institutions with few or no problems.
2. The major articulation problem reported by senior institutional personnel is the inclusion of upper-division, professional, and nonbaccalaureate courses (as defined by the senior institutions) in the transfer-oriented associate degree programs at the community colleges.
3. The most often noted curriculum-related problem of concern to community college personnel deals with the business subject area. More than one-third of all instances of curriculum-related articulation problems reported by community college personnel are within this area. Business-related articulation problems were identified at all but one public senior institution by community college personnel.
4. Based on narrative responses received from senior institution personnel, the following are seen as additional articulation concerns: lack of knowledge about degree and major requirements, lack of appropriate prerequisites; and inappropriate academic preparation for successful continuation

*These conclusions are from Section IV, Summary and Conclusions, and are based on data from Section III, Presentation and Discussion of Findings, in Community College-Senior College Articulation in Illinois, a Report and Recommendations by the Illinois Community College-Senior College Articulation Task Force, August, 1978.

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at the junior level. These perceptions were reported at one-half of the public universities and several of the nonpublic colleges.

5. Noncurricular areas of most concern, as perceived by community college personnel, are related to senior college and university approaches to registration and admissions processing, advisement of transfer students, credit evaluation and grading systems.
6. Problems most often identified by community college transfers are related to a lack of knowledge at the community college concerning senior college academic requirements.
7. Many transfer students view advising and counseling at the senior institution as a problem area.
8. Slightly more than one-third (38%) of the transfer respondents report that completion of the baccalaureate degree takes longer than expected. However, concerns related to receiving credit and repeating courses are reported to be less serious.
9. The largest proportion of community college transfer students reporting problems was 44 percent in one of the 14 problem areas tested; correspondingly, the smallest proportion reported was 16 percent in one area. Mean response scores indicating the existence of problems were obtained on only 4 of the 14 problem areas surveyed.
10. The 1970 IBHE Resolution provides an effective framework for the smooth transfer of community college students to those institutions which have implemented it. Therefore, a new or revised articulation compact is not warranted at this time.
11. Community college transfers at senior colleges and universities indicate a high regard and general satisfaction with their experiences at Illinois community colleges. This conclusion is based on the finding that more than four-fifths (81%) of the transfer students in this study indicated that they would choose to attend a community college prior to studying at a four-year institution, if they were to make the choice again.

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V

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Recommendations for Community Colleges and Senior Institutions

1. Both community colleges and senior colleges and universities should renew their commitment to develop a working partnership in Illinois higher education. Such renewal can best be reflected in constructive actions which are based first and foremost on identified student needs. As the first step in such constructive action, it is recommended that the following 1970 IBHE General Education Resolution continue to serve as the primary document and philosophical statement concerning articulation between community colleges and senior level institutions of higher education in Illinois:

> Be it Resolved, that the Board of Higher Education views the public Junior-Community Colleges of Illinois as partners with senior colleges and universities in the delivery of the first two years of education beyond high school in this state. There is need for full acceptance and recognition of this development throughout the higher education community. In furthering this goal, all trustees, administrations and faculties of senior colleges and universities are requested to declare that a transfer student in good standing, who has completed an associate degree based on baccalaureate-oriented sequences to be transferred from a Junior-Community College in Illinois be considered a) to have attained junior standing and b) to have met lower-division general education requirements of senior institutions.

Additional agreement beyond the provisions of this document may result at the institutional level as deemed appropriate.

2. It is recommended that two- and four-year institutions cooperate in the continued refinement of efforts to communicate to prospective transfer students the academic requirements at senior colleges and universities; and to provide current transfer admissions standards, curriculum guides which list first- and second-year program requirements and course equivalencies, and other degree requirements to the

community colleges in a form which can be easily adapted to the community college environment and needs. In addition, a statewide handbook should be developed which displays the courses recommended and/or required for the first two years in each of the 12 public senior universities and in cooperating private colleges for the ten curricula which community college transfers enter most often.

3. It is recommended that representatives from community colleges and from senior institutions continue to discuss lower-division/upper-division course classification. It is further recommended that the Combined Community College-Senior College Coordinators' Group appoint a six-member ad hoc committee with equal representation from community colleges and senior institutions, plus ex officio representations from IBHE and ICCB, for the purpose of recommending criteria which could be used within the various subject areas in making lower-division/upper-division distinctions.

4. It is recommended that an independent study be conducted under the auspices of the ICCB, with the full cooperation and support of community college and senior institution business faculty and administrations, to recommend which community college business courses (e.g., marketing, management, finance, and accounting) are appropriate for transfer to schools of business for degree purposes. This study should commence at the earliest possible time and be completed in an expeditious manner.

B. Recommendations for Community Colleges

1. It is recommended that community colleges continue to improve efforts to effectively advise prospective transfer students concerning proper selection of courses. Special attention should be given to the articulation guidelines of the institutions to which students plan to transfer.

2. It is recommended that community colleges continue to improve their staff development efforts to familiarize community college counselors, advisers, and faculty with the dynamics involved in the student transfer process, with specific attention given to:
   a. Effective use of course and program equivalency lists.
   b. Distinctions made between courses accepted for transfer at the institutional level and those applicable to degree requirements at the college, departmental, or curricular level.
   c. Identifying and communicating with a higher percentage of students early in the transfer-planning process.
   d. Application of the various community college degrees upon transfer to senior institutions.
3. It is recommended that each baccalaureate-oriented associate degree awarded include a minimum of 60 semester or 90 quarter hours of lower-division credit earned through coursework, institutional proficiency exams, external standardized exams (e.g., CLEP, PEP, AP), or some combination of these. The 60/90-hour lower-division provision does not preclude the application of upper-division credits earned at a senior college by reverse transfer students toward associate degree requirements.
4. It is recommended that credit hours generated through departmental or remedial coursework not be used to meet baccalaureate-oriented associate degree requirements.
5. It is recommended that each community college's baccalaureate-oriented curriculum incorporate within its requirements credits reasonably distributed among the following:
   a. Communication arts
   b. Humanities
   c. Social sciences
   d. Natural sciences and mathematics

   In addition, it is recognized that, in some cases, career-vocational courses may be appropriate and that, in such cases, these courses will be legitimate in the transfer curriculum.

6. It is recommended that community colleges alert prospective transfer students to their decision-making responsibilities, with particular attention given to:
   a. Advising community college students that most senior colleges and universities require a minimum of 60 semester or 90 quarter hours to be completed at a four-year college or university to meet degree requirements.
   b. Acquainting students with the essential steps involved in comparing transfer colleges and programs and in the interpretation of catalogs.
   c. Disseminating transfer-planning guides or check-lists which include a suggested decision-making/action timetable.
   d. Acquainting students with the differing purposes of the various courses provided in comprehensive community colleges.

C. Recommendations for Senior Colleges and Universities

1. It is recommended that senior colleges and universities increase their commitment to develop, regularly update, and disseminate curriculum-related materials and guides, such as course equivalency lists and program sequencing materials, to community college personnel.
2. It is recommended that senior colleges and universities develop and implement, in cooperation with community colleges, a system whereby transfer students can know, prior to advisement and enrollment, which specific courses and credit hours will be required to complete the bachelor's degree.
3. It is recommended that senior colleges and universities designate selected faculty or staff at the departmental or program level to serve as academic advisers specifically for transfer students. Staff development efforts should be directed at familiarizing these advisers with the dynamics involved in the transfer process. In addition, it is recommended that the senior institutions insure that the designated transfer advisers provide increased assistance to community college transfers in program planning and course selection.

4. It is recommended that senior colleges and universities which provide housing for students make provisions for transfer students to have access and consideration equal to that of other entering students.
5. It is recommended that senior institution admission and transfer credit evaluation policies be flexible enough that colleges and universities could accept for transfer vocational and technical courses considered appropriate for baccalaureate degree credit at the senior institution concerned.
6. It is recommended that senior institutions consider for admission and program placement purposes decisions made by community college officials as expressed on student transcripts.
7. It is recommended that each senior college and university insure fair and equal treatment of all students in the administration of transfer-credit evaluation policies at the departmental level.
8. It is recommended that senior colleges and universities recognize the need for and consider the development of capstone programs for the career-oriented associate degree graduate seeking the baccalaureate degree.
9. It is recommended that transfer students be allowed to graduate under the senior institution catalog in force the year the student entered the community college, as long as the student's college attendance is not interrupted.

D. General Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the ICCB staff continue to call and conduct statewide subject area articulation conferences. It is suggested that the ICCB staff schedule such conferences in the problem areas identified in this study.
2. It is recommended that the IBHE provide financial support through projects, grants, or contracts for community college and senior institution efforts designed to further improve the transfer process in Illinois. Consideration should be given to programs such as staff

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development for transfer student advisers, curriculum guides, transfer planning handbooks, and videotape information materials.

3. It is recommended that the coordinators' groups representing community colleges and senior institutions continue their separate organizations and meet jointly as appropriate.
4. It is recommended that the Illinois Community College-Senior College Articulation Task Force reconvene one year after the recommendations made herein are acted upon to develop and disseminate to the appropriate institutions and agencies a report on the implementation of these recommendations.
5. It is recommended that the Illinois Board of Higher Education and the Illinois Community College Board jointly establish a standing committee on articulation comprised of community college and senior institution articulation coordinators. The primary purpose of this committee will be the continuous review of transfer student processes between and among institutions of higher education in Illinois.

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APPENDIX A

(Proposed) BACCALAUREATE ARTICULATION COMPACT

Endorsed by the Illinois Community College Board, July 23, 1976

The community college graduate who is admitted to a college or university awarding the baccalaureate degree shall receive full credit for baccalaureate oriented level work completed in a program which has been approved by the Illinois Community College Board and the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

To implement this compact, all trustees, administrators, and faculties of colleges and universities accepting this concept do declare that a transferring student who has completed an associate in arts degree or an associate in science degree in an Illinois public community college, has attained full junior class or third year standing in a college or university awarding the baccalaureate degree. The student is guaranteed the same standing and equivalent enrollment schedule as continuing students who have completed similar programs and courses at the same point in their studies, if the following qualifications are met:

1. that the transferring student plans to major or to specialize in an area of study in which he or she has completed recommended lower division courses in the intended major or area of specialization which are equivalent to those taken by continuing students

2. That the university or college to which the community college student transfers has a program in the student's intended major or area of specialization

3. that the 60-65 semester hours of course work represented in the associate degree include only baccalaureate oriented college level courses which appear in the ICCB master course file. Baccalaureate oriented courses are those which are coded Program Classification System (PCS) 1.1 in the ICCB master course file. In those instances in which community colleges do not offer such courses in baccalaureate oriented disciplines which are coded PCS 1.1, the PCS 1.2 (career oriented) courses which are equivalent to those taken by lower division senior college students shall apply

4. that within the 60-65 semester hour associate degree, the transferring student shall have completed course work by instruction or examination in each of the following general education areas totaling a minimum of at least 36 semester hours:

   a. English and/or Communications
   b. Humanities
   c. Mathematics and/or Natural Sciences
   d. Social Sciences

   Students in certain professional majors or areas of specialization should be advised to complete applicable general education requirements other than those listed above.

Community college graduates who have completed programs other than those leading to the associate in arts or the associate in science degrees may wish to transfer to baccalaureate degree granting colleges and universities, but the associate degree course work of such students may be reviewed individually by the receiving institution to determine what courses may be acceptable for transfer to the baccalaureate degree. Community colleges and senior colleges and universities are encouraged to cooperate in order to facilitate the smooth transition of the associate in applied science degree transfer students. Senior colleges and universities should also cooperate with community colleges in developing career programs that provide Illinois students the opportunity to complete applied science degrees that interface with capstone programs at the baccalaureate degree granting institution.

There is nothing in this compact that would prevent an institution from making individual compacts with individual institutions, or from modifying this compact for its own institution as long as the requirements placed upon students were not more restrictive than those listed above.

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